3 Essential Strategies for **Multicloud Success**

Leverage data to overcome multicloud and hybrid cloud complexity

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Organizations are accelerating their cloud journeys to achieve greater levels of agility, resilience and innovation. They're adopting multicloud and hybrid cloud environments to optimize cost and take advantage of best-of-breed services. However, multiple public and private clouds — each with dozens to hundreds of distinct services — are often coupled with on-prem workloads, leading to exponential complexity that creates new challenges.

Visibility and control become more difficult with distributed and siloed environments. A larger attack surface means greater security risk. More potential points of failure can turn into costly downtime. The recurring concerns amid the shift to multicloud and hybrid cloud are making many organizations wonder if their growth is outpacing their ability to manage complexity — with a third reporting that multicloud might not be worth the effort and trouble.[1]

Yet multicloud is inevitable if organizations want to have access to the largest range of cloud services as they innovate for their customers. It goes hand in hand with digital transformation and creating new digital customer experiences. And when apps and experiences depend on cloud-native technologies that are ephemeral or dispersed, like microservices and serverless functions, ensuring reliability and security is a must. Seconds of downtime can result in millions of dollars lost and a single security incident can cause a brand irreparable harm.

Fortunately, there are strategies to help overcome complexity to better manage multicloud and hybrid cloud environments. There are also purpose-built tools that can serve as the data backbone for the new technology landscape, accelerating cloud-driven transformation by powering comprehensive data strategies for IT, DevOps and security teams. Here's what to focus on.

1 Survey of U.S. and UK cloud purchase decision makers conducted by ClearPath Strategies, an independent strategic consulting and public opinion research firm.

Manage Multicloud and Hybrid Cloud Complexity

Organizations are going all-in on multicloud environments, often unwittingly, unaware of the breadth of the distributed footprint of their infrastructure and applications. And the momentum is not slowing down — 92% of enterprises report having a multicloud strategy, and 80% have a hybrid one.[2]

> Complexity is the biggest blocker to better utilization of external cloud services.

In this process, organizations are running into challenges especially when it comes to security (81%), managing cloud spend (79%) and managing multicloud (72%).[3] Entire organizations are encumbered in how they secure, operate and innovate even with specialized tools and teams. In fact, complexity is the biggest blocker to better utilization of external cloud services[4] as quick growth outpaces organizations' ability to manage the resulting distributed systems. What's driving up complexity? A lack of visibility and the inability to parse signals from noise to take action quickly. Currently, when something breaks, either the individual cause, problem or solution is immediately clear to less than a third of organizations.[5]

To overcome this snag in the cloud journey, leaders are adopting one unified, highly scalable data platform that offers end-to-end visibility and analysis across any environment. What should this platform be able to do? It must empower security operations to find and prevent threats while having full control over an organization's security posture. It must also provide full-stack observability for better context and performance management, giving developers the visibility they need to fix problems quickly so they can focus on innovating. With the ability to harness any data, from any source, at any scale, organizations are able to realize the benefits of multicloud and hybrid cloud environments.

2, 3   Flexera 2021 State of Cloud report

4, 5   Survey of US and UK cloud purchase decision makers conducted by ClearPath Strategies, an independent strategic consulting and public opinion research firm

Make Security a Data Opportunity

Security is an endless cat-and-mouse game, with new threats surfacing and vulnerabilities being exploited constantly, often unbeknownst to victim organizations. Advanced threats and more opportunities for lateral movement across distributed environments can mean attacks go unnoticed for far too long — median dwell time can range from 17 to 19 days. The SolarWinds attacks, one of the most impactful sets of breaches in the last couple of years, started in 2019 before being discovered over a year later.

> Organizations don't have to sacrifice agility or innovation for fear of security risk if they have a comprehensive view of applications and infrastructure.

Multicloud and hybrid cloud infrastructures are making security an even bigger worry. Forty-one percent of organizations report that at least half of their business-critical workloads/applications are in the cloud, while 53% consider all their business-critical workloads to be cloud-native today.[6] No wonder 78% of organizations report one or more challenges related to the cybersecurity team's scalability — the sheer volume of security alerts is redirecting efforts from proactive improvement to tactical firefighting, according to Splunk's State of Security report. The rate of change alone is daunting, with processes initially tailored for on-prem environments requiring an overhaul in record time to accommodate internal requirements while still meeting end user expectations.

Other cloud-native security challenges reported by organizations include struggling with maintaining consistency across data centers and cloud (50%), and the use of multiple security controls leading to more cost and complexity (42%).[7] When cloud services work with different data formats and sources, monitoring can be siloed to each environment, and moving data can impact compliance.

Visibility and real-time insights amid this change are instrumental. Organizations don't have to sacrifice agility or innovation for fear of security risk if they have a comprehensive view of applications and infrastructure across their environment, as well as the build process for their apps and services.

The right lens offers a clear picture for monitoring, investigating, analyzing and detecting threats across multicloud and hybrid cloud environments, unifying and strengthening an organization's security posture in the process. In addition, data-driven automation and orchestration are critical security capabilities that help analysts detect, investigate and respond to alerts faster. The result is exponential improvements in response time, scale and analyst effectiveness by having them focus on areas needing human judgement.

Use Observability to Harness the Power of Multicloud

Organizations are rapidly adopting cloud-native technologies in the form of microservices, serverless functions and containers. Conventional monitoring techniques and tools struggle to track all the ephemeral infrastructure and interdependencies in these distributed architectures.

As a result, organizations are leaning on observability as a way to monitor modern systems more effectively. Observability is the ability to measure the internal states of systems by examining their outputs (typically metrics, traces and logs) and provides deep visibility into distributed systems so teams can get to the root cause of issues and improve system performance.

How much of a benefit are organizations getting out of this new practice?

Splunk's State of Observability report highlights the significant improvement and acceleration of digital initiatives and innovation experienced by observability leaders. These leaders see the following results, compared to organizations at earlier stages:

More success launching innovative products/services —

60%

more new products in the last year

2.3 times

better visibility into security posture

Almost **2** times

better visibility into public cloud infrastructure

2.9 times

better visibility into application performance

The experiences of mature adopters illustrate the benefits of observability, especially in multicloud and hybrid cloud environments. The key to their maturity is a comprehensive approach that gives them the ability to collect and analyze all data from any source. This is only possible with a platform that offers contextual end-to-end visibility and real-time insights, from frontend to backend and across the full-stack. The result of not taking observability seriously today is falling behind the competition tomorrow.

Stepping Into the Future

In short, organizations must identify their gaps and manage their environments with strategies spanning from their cloud teams to leadership. Integral to multicloud and hybrid cloud visibility and control is a data backbone composed of a:

- A unified, highly scalable data platform
- Modern security ops to be able to find and prevent threats and have full control over your security posture
- Full-stack observability to understand and manage performance and cost while giving developers the visibility they need to be productive

With unified visibility, troubleshooting and analytics-driven guided and automated action at any stage of the cloud journey, organizations are able to overcome complexity and realize the power of cloud transformation.

Don't get stuck at the back of the pack. Accelerate your cloud journey today.

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